2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 AF12 North China AF12

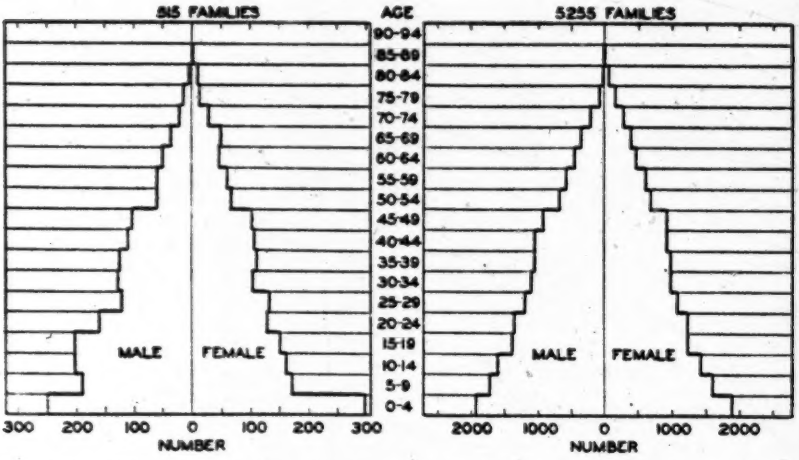

FIGURE 8. AGE AND SEX PYRAMID, 515 AND 5,255 FAMILIES

U.S. figures, however, are smaller below 15 and then larger for almost all the higher age groups.

For the females the U.S. figures were less than the Chinese for the groups under 10 years of age, higher from 15 to 44 and less for the ages 55 and above. Twenty-four per cent of the Chinese women were 45 years of age or older, 22.5 per cent of the U.S. women. The difference is not large, but it is rather surprising to have the figures show a larger proportion of Chinese women in the older age groups. Conditions of life in Ting Hsien would lead one to expect the opposite.

The pyramids in Figure 8 show the age and sex distribution of the 515 and the 5,255 families by five year age groups. As would be expected in an area with high birth and death rates, the pyramids both have a broad base. They both show relatively high death rates in the lower age groups, only slight decreases in the groups from 25 to 49 years of age, and then a sharp reduction in the number in the groups above 49 years of age. The 50 to 54 year age group of the 515 families was born in the years from 1875 to 1879. Those of the 5,255 families were born from 1876 to 1880. Those years included the big famine of 1877 and 1878. The hsien history says that at that time there was nothing growing on the land for thousands of li, that many refugees died along the road and the hungry people even resorted to cannibalism. Such a

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933)1954 AF12 North China AF12

time would necessarily reduce the birth rate and the number of survivors in the older groups. The difference between the numbers in the 50–54 and the 45–49 year age groups would seem to point to a rapid recovery in the birth rate soon after the famine.

The 1920 famine was shorter than that in 1877 and less severe, and evidently more adequate relief was provided. No sharp drop is shown in the age groups covering that period.

Marital Status

All but 14.4 per cent of the members of the 5,255 families over 14 years of age had been married. Of the males over 14, 21.2 per cent were unmarried but only 6.6 per cent of the females. In the United States 34.1 per cent of the males 15 years of age or over were single and 26.4 per cent of the females.[9] To give the complete picture of the marital condition of the Chinese families it is necessary to go below the usual 15-year limit, as 169 males and 33 females under 15 were married. Two of the 169 males were nine years old, three were 10, and 16 were 11 years old. Twelve was the youngest age at which any girls were married. For the entire group, including all ages, the proportion married was males 53.5 per cent, females 62.7 per cent, total 58 per cent.

In the 515 families 54.6 per cent of the entire group were or had been married. Of the males of all ages, 51.5 per cent were married and 58.5 per cent of the females. The different age distribution of the members of the two groups of families probably accounts for at least part of the difference in the proportions married.

There were 80 widowers in the 515 families, 8.5 per cent of the males who had been married. One hundred and sixty-four men, 17.4 per cent of those who had been married, had lost by death at least one wife. Thirteen had lost two, and two had lost three wives. One hundred and one men had remarried. Eleven had married three times and one was living with his fourth wife.

There were 143 widows listed, 14.1 per cent of the women who had been married. Widows can and do remarry in Ting Hsien. Twenty women were reported as having been married twice. Two of these had lost their second husbands. The total number of women who had been widowed was 161, which was 15.8 per cent of the women who had been married.

9. U.S. Census.

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 / AF12 North China AF12

Birth and Death Rates

163 A study made by the health department of the Mass Education Association found the crude birth rate to be 40.1 per 1,000, the crude death rate 27.2 per 1,000. The infant mortality was 199 per 1,000 live births, the maternal death rate 13.0 per 1,000 live births.

These figures verify the general report that the population was gradually increasing. The only figures we were able to secure that would give any indication of population growth over a period of years were from the elders of one village. They said that the number of families had increased steadily from 155 in 1882 to 180 in 1932, a growth of 16 per cent in 50 years. (See Chapter XV.) The increase, of course, could be the result of division of families rather than an increase in the number of persons, but the steady growth in the number of families seems to indicate at least some growth in population.

164 A health study of the students in 25 village primary schools showed that 58.5 per cent of the children had trachoma and 26.2 per cent ringworm.

Foot-binding

304 Foot-binding was almost universal among the women over 40 years of age in the 515 families (99.2 per cent). None of the girls under 13 178 years of age had bound feet. The figures for the intervening five year age groups show how a cultural pattern, which in the past had successfully defied an imperial ban, had disappeared within 30 years.

304 The origin of the Chinese custom of foot-binding is uncertain, but apparently it began about one thousand years ago. It is first definitely mentioned in connection with the court of the southern T'ang dynasty at Nanking, 937–75 A.D. This court practiced a life of luxury and enjoyed the sight of dancing girls, their feet clad with "bow-shoes", the upturned toes of which resembled the bow of a Roman galley. The small feet of the sought-after dancers may have started the style, but it hardly explains the spread and long continuance of foot-binding, which has meant so much limitation, discomfort, and pain to so many individuals over so many years.

In the twelfth century the highly influential scholar-philosopher, Chu Hsi (1130–1200) was, according to Dr. Lin Yutang, "enthusiastic in introducing foot-binding in southern Fukien as a means of spreading Chinese culture and teaching the separation of men and women."

1 [In Ting Hsien (Province)-- Analyst]